



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BLMnews
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROPOSED ANDREWS/STEENS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

The Andrews Management Unit (AMU) / Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA) Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) has been published and will be available to the public this week. Within the next six months two Records of Decision (ROD) will be issued, finalizing the Proposed RMP. One ROD will address management of the Steens Mountain CMPA, while the second will address that of the AMU. A combined management plan for Steens Mountain Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers included as an appendix in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS will be finalized at the same time.

"The comprehensive Andrews/Steens plan will guide land management decisions on over 1.7 million acres of Public Lands in Southeastern Oregon well into the future. This includes the Steens Mountain CMPA and all remaining lands within the Andrews Resource Area," says Dana Shuford, U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Burns District Manager. The plan provides for direction on land use issues such as managing upland ecological communities, wildlife habitat, wildland fires and prescribed fire, recreation opportunities, wild horses, noxious weeds, aquatic habitat and water quality, Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and more.

Elaine Brong, BLM's Oregon and Washington State Director says, "This plan is the culmination of nearly four years of intense collaborative efforts on the part of the BLM, the Steens Mountain Advisory Council, the Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council, many individual citizens, interest groups, Burns Paiute Tribe, and elected officials. Completion of this document brings the BLM one big step closer to completing the requirements of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000."

The public will have a 30-day protest period on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and a concurrent public comment period for the proposed Steens Mountain Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Plan. The 30-day protest and public comment periods will begin once the Environmental Protection Agency publishes its Notice of Availability in the Federal Register, which is anticipated to occur on Friday, August 13, 2004.

MORE

Instructions on filing protests and/or providing comments are included in the Proposed RMP/Final EIS in the Dear Interested Party letter. An electronic copy of the document can be found on the Burns District Web site at www.or.blm.gov/Burns.

For more information call BLM Burns District Planning and Environmental Coordinator Gary Foulkes at (541) 573-4541 weekdays between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.